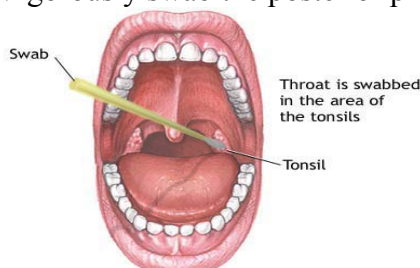


**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P.O. Box 3378  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:  
**File:**

**Instructions for Collection of Influenza Throat Swabs**

1. Tubes of VTM (viral transport medium) should be kept refrigerated at all times.
2. VTM is relatively stable. Tubes provided can be used throughout the influenza season provided the date of usage does not exceed the expiration date printed on the outside of the tube.
3. Collect throat swabs only on individuals who became ill within the last 72 hours AND meet the following influenza-like illness criteria:
  - a. Fever  $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ , AND
  - b. Cough, sore throat, or other respiratory symptoms.
4. Throat swab procedure:
  - a. Remove both swabs from the wrapper.
  - b. Moisten both swabs with VTM by dipping into the tube.
  - c. Vigorously swab the posterior pharynx and tonsil area (avoiding tongue)



- d. Return the swabs to the same tube of VTM.
  - e. Break off sticks so that screw cap can be securely replaced.
  - f. Refrigerate tube immediately.
  - g. Complete the laboratory form provided.
5. Telephone the Disease Investigation Branch on Oahu at 586-4586; Hawaii 933-0912; Maui 984-8213; and Kauai 241-3563 for pick-up of swabs or to request additional tubes of VTM.

Note: Viral culture isolation results take approximately 14 days. However, it is important to determine the antigenic characterization of the respiratory virus.

Your assistance and participation in the Department of Health Influenza Surveillance Program is greatly appreciated.